

## *From the desk of Maribel Zubieta-Diaz...*

I have just finished teaching a class to our 8th graders on life's most important lessons. I was inspired, excited, and proud to see how much they have grown intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. This confirms my firm belief in the importance of the middle school years.

I remember these students two years ago. They were still eager children searching for their voices and trying to figure out the potential in their souls. The searching continues, as it will for the rest of their lives, but now it's a searching with purpose and a newly acquired sense of identity.

I feel grateful to their teachers, their families, and their school that have allowed them to grow at their pace surrounded by a nurturing environment.

I remember my middle school years. They were tumultuous. Besides the usual growing pains, the world around me was being shaken: the loss of my father, my grandmother, a revolution, the prospect of having to leave my country, my friends, my school. My anchor was the security I had developed with my peers, my family, my teachers, and the secure atmosphere of my school. I was allowed to discover, create, make mistakes, learn to get up after a disappointment, and develop a set of values and beliefs that I've carried with me my whole life.

This is what I want for each one of our students – a place that is a second home where it's safe to expand your wings and develop your character. C.E.A.'s middle school is just that. Stop by at any time of the day, and you will find students tackling a challenging academic curriculum, developing their talents, using technology, fine-tuning their social skills, discovering their strengths and putting them to good use.

Advisory time is my favorite time of the day. The next generation of scientists, artists, musicians, athletes, teachers, writers, dreamers, and doers is solidly being formed. The growth that we see in the middle school years is miraculous, and all it takes is patience and the right place at the right time.

I am looking forward to working with The C.E.A. class of 2013. I am looking forward to sharing the highlights of their last year at C.E.A. I am looking forward to their graduation day to celebrate their accomplishments, to see their faces reflecting the pride and joy that comes from belonging, from loyalty, from love, from a job well done.

And the legacy continues.....



Maribel Z. Diaz, Director